DARK HORSE COMICS ★ ONE FOR ONE

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★ ANOTHER LOOK AT A CLASSIC FIRST ISSUE! ★

ONE FOR ONE

THE GOON

ISSUE ONE

After a short run at another publisher and a self-published series, *The Goon* #1 (2003) from Dark Horse launched Goon, Frankie, and the Zombie Priest to new-found heights, garnering multiple awards year after year, receiving rave reviews in the mainstream press, and quickly making Eric Powell a favorite writer and artist among his peers in the industry.

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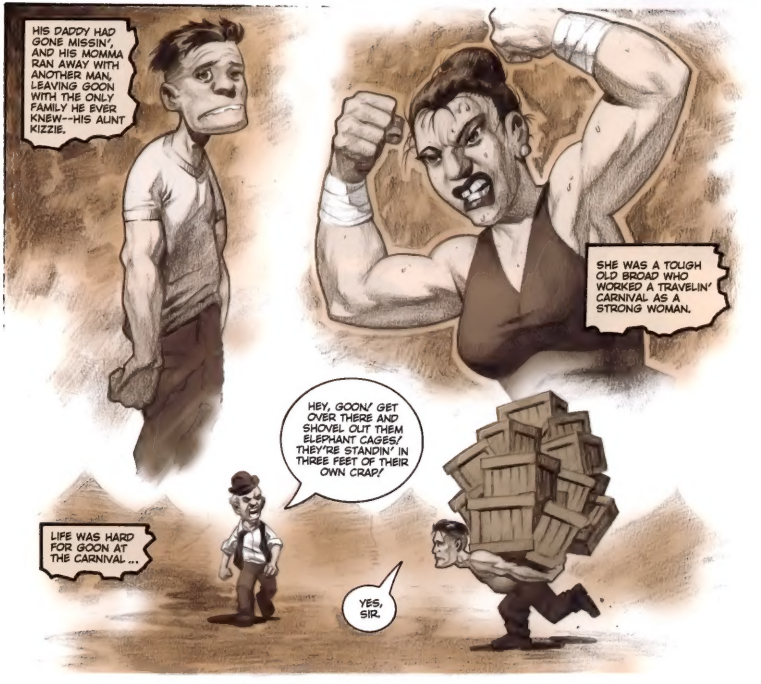
SOME FOLKS SAY THIS PLACE IS CURSED.
THAT ALL ANYONE CAN EXPECT OUT OF THIS TOWN IS HEARTACHE AND GRIEF.
AND FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN ... SOME FOLKS IS PROBABLY RIGHT.

TWO CASES IN PARTICULAR COME TO MIND, AND THEY BOTH TOOK PLACE ON THAT AWFUL NIGHT NEAR FIFTEEN YEAR AGO.
AND IF YOU ASK ME, IT WEREN'T NO COINCIDENCE EITHER.
I TELL YA, WHATEVER HAUNTS THIS PLACE WAS MAKIN' AN EXTRA EFFORT THAT NIGHT, AND WHAT IT SET IN MOTION IS BOUND TO COME TO A HEAD AT SOME POINT. YOU MARK MY WORDS.
YEP, THAT WAS THE NIGHT ALL THEM TROUBLES STARTED FOR THAT BOY CALLED GOON.


HIS DADDY HAD GONE MISSIN', AND HIS MOMMA RAN AWAY WITH ANOTHER MAN, LEAVING GOON WITH THE ONLY FAMILY HE EVER KNEW--HIS AUNT KIZZIE.
SHE WAS A TOUGH OLD BROAD WHO WORKED A TRAVELIN' CARNIVAL AS A STRONG WOMAN.
HEY, GOON! GET OVER THERE AND SHOVEL OUT THEM ELEPHANT CAGES! THEY'RE STANDIN' IN THREE FEET OF THEIR OWN CRAP!
LIFE WAS HARD FOR GOON AT THE CARNIVAL ...
YES, SIR.

BUT HE WAS HAPPY.
LOOK, AUNT KIZZIE! THE AMAZING FRANCIS TAUGHT ME HOW TO JUGGLE CHICKENS!
THAT'S GREAT, BABY!
IT WAS THE NIGHT LABRAZIO, THE MOST FEARED THUG IN THIS BURG, HAD FORCED THE CARNY TO HIDE HIM FROM THE LAW.
I NEED A PLACE TO SHACK UP, SEE. AND LUCKY FOR YOU, I'M GOING TO LET YOU HELP ME OUT.
GOON, BEING JUST AS CURIOUS AS THE NEXT KID, SNUCK OUT TO LABRAZIO'S TRAILER AND LEARNED HIMSELF A FEW THINGS.
YA SEE THIS BOOK, KID? THIS BOOK HOLDS THE NAMES OF EVERYONE I DO A FAVOR FOR, EVERYONE THAT OWES ME MONEY ... ANYONE I DO BUSINESS WITH, AND EVERYONE WHO HAS UPSET ME.
THOSE NAMES ARE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT.
BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THE COPS TO TRACK HIM DOWN.
COME ON OUT, LABRAZIO!
KIZZIE!!
DON'T SHOO--
BANG
AND KIZZIE WAS GUNNED DOWN TRYIN' TO PROTECT GOON.

PLEASE, KIZZIE! PLEEEASE! PLEASE DON'T BE DEAD! I AIN'T GOT NOBODY ELSE!
STUPID BROAD! SHOULDN'T'VE GOT IN THE WAY.
GAH!
THWAK!
THWAK!
THAK!
THWAK!

GOON DESTROYED THE BODIES AND TURNED TO THE HARD LIFE OF THE STREETS. USING THE BOOK, HE SET HIMSELF UP AS LABRAZIO'S COLLECTOR, AND LATER AS HIS ENFORCER, SAYING THE CRIME LORD HAD GONE INTO HIDING. THAT'S RIGHT, BECOMING THE ENFORCER OF THE MAN HE'D KILLED.
YEP, GOON'S IS A SAD YARN, BUT REMEMBER I SAID TWO TRAGEDIES TOOK PLACE ON THAT NIGHT.
WHILE THE GOON WAS TAKIN' HIS LUMPS, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN, HOUSTUS GRAVE HAD JUST MADE HIS WAY HOME FROM AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

MARY, I'M BACK.
HOW MUCH DID THE COW FETCH, HOUSTUS?
TEN DOLLARS.
I-IS THAT ALL?
YES, THAT'S ALL! HOW MUCH DO YOU EXPECT TO GET FOR A DRIED UP THREE-LEGGED MILKIN' COW?!
BUT... HOW WILL WE GET BY? WITH THE BABIES ON THE WAY AND ALL.
ON THE WAY BACK... I MET A MAN, MARY. A PREACHER MAN THAT SAID HE HAD NO NAME. JUST... STANDING BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD AS IF HE WAS EXPECTING ME. SAID HE KNEW TIMES WERE TOUGH AND WANTED TO GIVE ME WORK. SAID HE'D PAY ME TO... TO...
TO WHAT, HOUSTUS?
TO DIG UP BODIES.
HOUSTUS! YOU MUSTN'T! IT'S BLASPHEMOUS AND WICKED!
MY PAPPY WORKED THIS LAND HIS WHOLE LIFE AND NEVER HAD A CENT TO SHOW FOR IT. THEN HE WENT AND DIED IN A COMPROMISING SITUATION WITH HIS PLOW MULE! WHAT KIND OF LEGACY IS THAT TO LEAVE A MAN?!
I WON'T HAVE IT! I WON'T SLAVE MY LIFE AWAY TO DIE PENNILESS!

I'M TAKIN' THAT PREACHER MAN'S MONEY!
NO, HOUSTUS! IT'S A SIN! IT WILL HAVE TO BE PAID FOR!
BUT HOUSTUS WOULDN'T LISTEN. THAT PREACHER WOUND UP BEIN' THAT DURN ZOMBIE PRIEST. THE PRIEST THAT WAS RESURRECTIN' THE DEAD FOR HIS GANG. AND HOUSTUS GRAVE WAS SUPPLYIN' HIM WITH HIS SOLDIERS.
IT WEREN'T LONG BEFORE THE FATE FEARED BY MARY GRAVE FELL UPON THEM.
HOUSTUS CAUGHT SOME MYSTERIOUS KIND OF LEPROSY.
WHILE MARY LAY UP ILL AND DYIN' FROM HER PREGNANCY GOIN' BAD.
YOU'VE DONE THIS TO US. YOU WILL NOT BE FORGIVEN, AND OUR CHILDREN WILL BEAR YOUR CURSE.
AFTER GIVIN' BIRTH TO TWO DEFORMED MONSTERS, MARY GRAVE DIED.
MARY GRAVE

NOW, YEARS LATER, THE GOON IS REVEALED AS THE HEAD OF THE LABRAZIO GANG AND THE ONLY THING KEEPIN' THEM ZOMBIES AT BAY.
WHILE HOUSTUS GRAVE AND HIS TWO MANGLED SONS STILL STALK THE BONE YARDS NIGHTLY TO SUPPLY CORPSES FOR THE PRIEST'S ARMY OF THE UNDEAD.
BUT THAT AIN'T THE END OF THE STORY OF...
THE GOON
AND THE FAMILY GRAVE
PITCH THEM SPADES AT 'EM, BOYS! THEY'RE ON US LIKE STINK ON A DEAD POLE CAT!
BEGGA!
N'GAH!
GET 'EM, FRANKY! THEY'RE ALMOST TO LONELY STREET!
LET'S SEE HOW YOU MUGS LIKE A LITTLE TOMMY-GUN!
RATA-TA-TA-TA-TA!
TAKE THAT, YOU CIRCUS FREAKS!
WATCH YER MOUTH! I HAD FAMILY THAT WAS CIRCUS FREAKS!

LET'S SEE 'EM FOLLOW US DOWN HERE!
LONELY ST.
SLACK JAWS!
REVERSE IT!

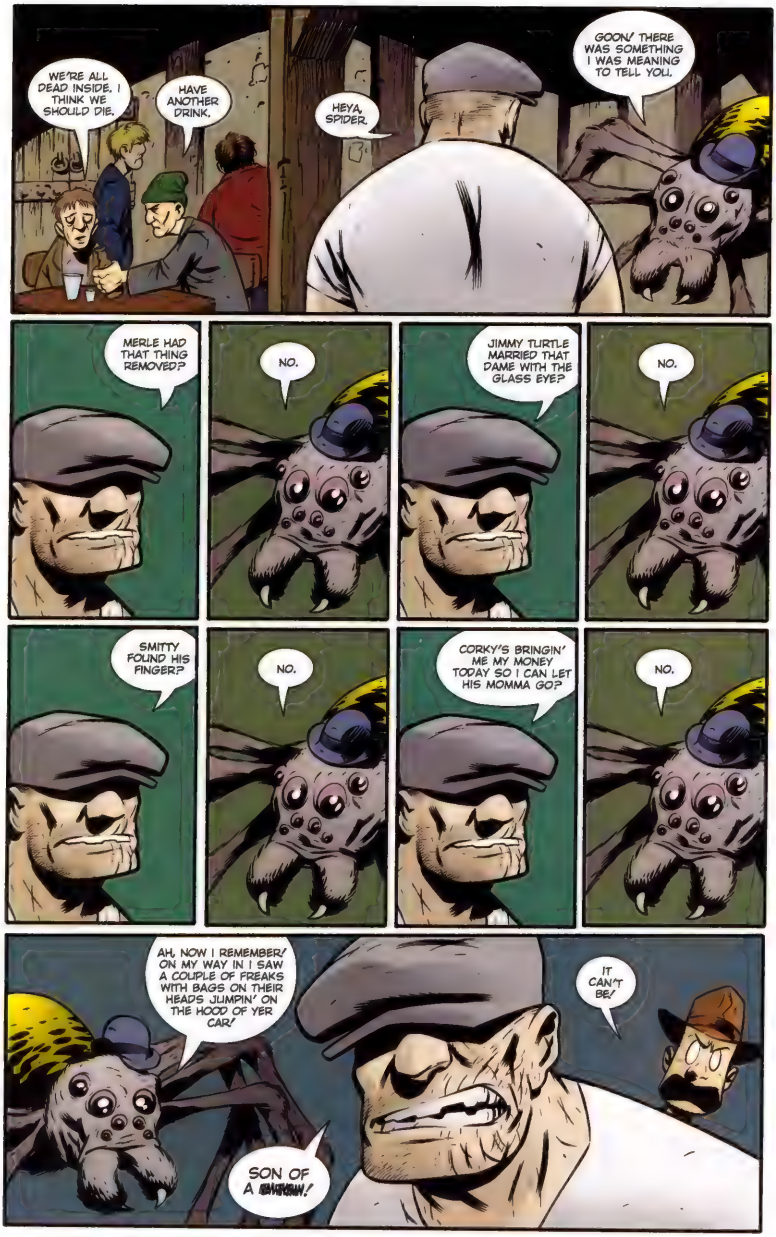
RATA-TA-TA-TA-TA-TA-TA!
GET OFF IT, WORM DIE!
SKREEEE!
LOST 'EM AGAIN!
YEAH, LIKE LAST WEEK WHEN THEM STUPID ORANGUTANS GOT IN THE WAY!
BWW! I WANTED TA POUND THEM APES!

DOESN'T IT LOOK GOOD, BUZZARD? WOULDN'T YOU LIKE JUST A LITTLE BITE?
EEH-EEH-- I WOULDN'T TAKE SO MUCH AS A SUGAR CUBE FROM YER HAND, YOU SKIRT WEARIN' MAGGOT!
SIR, GRAVE IS HERE.
IT'S ABOUT TIME! I NEEDED REINFORCEMENTS THREE WEEKS AGO!
SAY, WHO'S HE?
OH, HIM. JUST A LITTLE MISHAP OF MINE FROM SOME YEARS BACK. SORT OF A REVERSE ZOMBIE, REALLY. A LIVING MAN WITH AN INSATIABLE HUNGER FOR DEAD MEN'S FLESH.
THE PATHETIC FOOL ACTUALLY TRIED TO HUNT ME DOWN AND KILL ME.
NOW, I'M STARVING HIM. JUST FOR CURIOSITY. JUST TO SEE HOW LONG HE CAN LAST. WHAT'S IT BEEN, BUZZARD, TWO MONTHS? APPARENTLY THE ACCIDENT HAS MADE HIM INCREDIBLY RESILIENT.
I GOT YER RESILIENT RIGHT HERE, YOU BOW-LEGGED PRISSY LITTLE FAIRY MARY!
I'M GONNA SKIN YOU AND WEAR YER ASS AS A PARTY HAT!

I'M GONNA RIP YER ARMS AND LEGS OFF AND USE YER TORSO FOR A FOOT STOOL!
MAY I BORROW THAT SHOVEL?
I'M GONNA TAKE SOME RAZOR BLADES, A BROKEN BOTTLE, AND A RABID OTTER AND SHOVE 'EM UP YER--
KLANG!
SHAT UP!
NOW WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR ME?
OVER HERE.
THIS? THIS IS IT? THERE'S HARDLY ANY FLESH LEFT ON THIS BODY! I CAN'T WORK WITH THIS KIND OF MATERIAL!
THAT'S THE BEST WE COULD GET! THE GOON'S BEEN ON OUR HEELS EVERY TIME WE GET THREE BLOCKS OFF LONELY STREET!
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THAT UNEXPECTED HERD OF MIGRATING ORANGUTANS THAT MYSTERIOUSLY BURST INTO FLAMES, HE WOULD'VE GOT US LAST WEDNESDAY!

THE GOON! HOW LONG WILL THAT CROMAG THWART MY EVERY MOVE?!
YEAH, THAT WAS PRETTY BAD HOW HE HAD YOU THINKIN' FOR ALL THOSE YEARS HE WAS WORKIN' FOR LABRAZIO WHEN IN FACT HE WAS IN CHARGE.
YEP, HAD YOU RUNNIN' AROUND LIKE A CHUMP TRYING TO KILL THE MAN HE ALREADY KILLED. I DON'T THINK I EVER SEEN A GUY MADE TO LOOK MOR--
KLANG!
AIN'T NO CALL TA GO HITTIN' A MAN WITH HIS OWN SHOVEL!
I CANNOT EXPAND MY TERRITORY WITHOUT MORE TROOPS! NO EXCUSES, HOUSTUS!
I WANT FRESH CORPSES, AND I WANT THEM NEXT WEEK!
WHAT ABOUT THE GOON?
NO EXCUSES!
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF THE GOON OURSELVES, BOYS.
BAHDUH!
YEGAH!

DID YOU SEE THAT ORANGUTAN? IT WAS MAKING ROMANTIC WITH A LIGHT POST THEN BURST INTO FLAMES!
AWW, DIS HAM IS ROMANTISIST DERE IS!
NORTONS
PUB
SAY, PEACHES, HOWS ABOUT COMIN' BACK TO MY PLACE TO HELP ME COUNT THE CEILING TILES?
BLARCH!
AND SO CHARLIE NOODLES SAYS, "I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS, BUT IT'S GOT MY PANTS AND WON'T GIVE 'EM BACK!"
HA! GOOD OLD CHARLIE NOODLES!
SLAP!
OW!
YEAH, CHARLIE NOODLES IS GOOD PEOPLE.
SHE HIT ME! WHY AM I THE ONE ALWAYS GETTIN' SLAPPED AROUND BY THE FEMALES?
CAUSE YOU ACT LIKE A JERK.
WHATTA YA MEAN ACT LIKE A JERK?!
REMEMBER WHEN RITA'S OLD MAN GOT KILLED AND YA OFFERED HER A POST-MEMORIAL QUICKIE?
THAT WAS AN ACT OF KINDNESS! I GOT A SOFT HEART!


WE'RE ALL DEAD INSIDE. I THINK WE SHOULD DIE.
HAVE ANOTHER DRINK.
HEYA, SPIDER.
GOON! THERE WAS SOMETHING I WAS MEANING TO TELL YOU.
MERLE HAD THAT THING REMOVED?
NO.
JIMMY TURTLE MARRIED THAT DAME WITH THE GLASS EYE?
NO.
SMITTY FOUND HIS FINGER?
NO.
CORKY'S BRINGIN' ME MY MONEY TODAY SO I CAN LET HIS MOMMA GO?
NO.
AH, NOW I REMEMBER! ON MY WAY IN I SAW A COUPLE OF FREAKS WITH BAGS ON THEIR HEADS JUMPIN' ON THE HOOD OF YER CAR!
IT CAN'T BE!
SON OF A [redacted]!

THUD!
THUD!
THUD!
THUD!
THUD!

WELL IF IT AIN'T THE MONGOLOID TWINS! YOU PUNKS GOT SOME NERVE!
YOU DONE GONE AND MESSED WITH THE WRONG MAN TODAY!

THAT'S RIGHT, BOYS! DRAW 'EM OUT AND INTRODUCE 'EM TO OLD DOUBLE BARREL!

NORTON'S PUB

BOOM!

HUH?

RUN FOR IT, BOYS! GRANDPAPPY'S DOUBLE BARREL HAS BETRAYED US! THERE'S NOTHING LEFT TO TRUST IN THIS WORLD!
HEY, GET BACK HERE!
QUICK, ONTO THE TRAIN!
GET OUTTA HERE!
FRANKY!
YEAH?
I'M GONNA PITCH YOU AT THAT TRAIN!
YER GONNA WHAT?!

AH!
SMACK!
OKAY, WHERE ARE YA?
THUD!
YOU AIN'T SO TUFF!
WATCH IT, BOYS, HE'S COMIN' UP!
PANT! PANT! WHY I GOTTA BE BUILT LIKE A GORILLA?

WHAT THE? GET OFF!
YOU MONKEYS CAN'T HANG ON FOREVER! JUST WAIT TILL I GET ONE OF YA IN PUNCHIN' VIEW!
HANG ON, BOYS! I'LL BRAIN HIM WITH THIS HERE PIPE WRENCH!

TRACK SWITCH -B-
THAT HAD BEST BE YOUR TOE IN MY EAR, POTATO HEAD!
DEAD END!
ALL RIGHT, GOON, NOW WE GOT YA!
IS THAT RIGHT?
THUD!
NOW I'M GONNA LEARN YOU BOYS A THING OR TWO ABOUT BROKEN BONES AND INTERNAL BLEEDING!
I'LL START WITH... UH-OH!

THIS AIN'T GOOD!
UH, W-WHAT?
HOBO JUNGUL
THE HOBO JUNGLE!
THAT'S JUST GRE--
GOON!
WAKE UP!
THEM HOBOES IS GONNA COOK US, GOON!

C'MON, NOW! LET'S WORK TOGETHER ON THIS!
EVEN TO SAVE MY OWN HIDE, I WOULDN'T HELP YOU!
THAT'S RIGHT! WE'D RATHER BE EATEN BY CANNIBALS!
ARE WE SURE WE'D RATHER BE EATEN BY CANNIBALS, GOON?
QUIET! IT'S THE KING HOBO!

EBA ZU!
ZEEBA ZABA
ZEBA ZU!
BAGA
NEBA PHA!
ZEBA?
BUDA N'DUH
'PHBLEEERT'
DA BAHDA!
AW, FER
CHRIST, THEM
MONKEYS SPEAK
HOBO!

ZEE ZADAZEBA ZU!
NAW! NO! DON'T LET 'EM GO! C'MON! EAT 'EM!
I KNOW THEY LOOK NASTY, BUT WITH SOME GRAVY AND BISCUITS THAT'S GOOD EATIN'!
HA! SEE YA 'ROUND, GOON! THEN AGAIN--NO I WON'T!
THAT'S IT! I AIN'T STANDIN' FOR THIS KINDA TREATMENT FROM A BUNCH OF JUNGLE TRAMPS!
KRACK!
GAH!
OKAY, HOBOES! I GOT BEATINGS TA HAND OUT, AND I AIN'T GOT ALL NIGHT, SO STEP UP AND TAKE IT LIKE A MAN!

POW!

HA HA! JUST WAIT TILL THE PRIEST SEES WHAT WE BROUGHT HIM!
NOW THAT THE GOON IS BOILIN' IN A STEW POT, WE'LL BE ON EASY STREET, BOYS!
READY?
LIGHT ME.
BOOM!
STUPID HOBOES.

THAT'LL LEARN 'EM!
WOO-HOO! WOO-HOO!
SKREE!
NAAH! G'NAAH!
I LIKE 'EM BEST WHEN THEY CATCH FIRE.
FWOOSH!

END!

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THE GOON

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